

The Christian.

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EDITORIAL.

THE GREATEST TRUTH IN THE WORLD—THIS
IS MY BELOVED SON.

Love is said to be the greatest thing in the world, and the above announcement may be justly called the greatest truth in the world, for reasons too numerous to be mention.

It is the central truth of the New Testament. The Old Testament has many important truths, but its great central truth is the "Unity of Deity." "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." Other nations had lords many and gods many, but to Israel there was one Lord. All worship was due to Him; all laws had His signature. The New Testament has many truths, but its great central truth is, "Jesus the Christ is the Son of the living God." To Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God. His name is heaven's sure seal to every law of the New Testament.

This is the only truth directly spoken from heaven to men. God sent His inspired servants to tell His mind to the people, but this truth was so great that He opened heaven and spoke it himself.

It is great because intended and adapted for all men, at all times and in all places. Some truths were for some persons only, and even for them, at certain times, Jesus had things to say to His disciples which they could not hear at the time; but this truth is never out of place or date. When a remarkable stranger enters a city or a country, it is in place for any one, from a school-boy to a sage, to ask who the man is; and when one so wonderful as Jesus comes among men, it is the privilege of all, old and young, learned and illiterate, Jew and Gentile, to ask who He is, and to receive from their Creator and their Judge the short and sublime answer—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus blessed the first man who confessed this truth, and called him Petros, or moving rock; but the truth itself he called Petra, or bed-rock, and said of it, "My Father has revealed to thee. I will build my church on it, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it.

This rock truth, this sure foundation, was tried in every possible way before the church was built upon it. Just after His Father had uttered it at the Jordan, Jesus was tried of the devil. "If Thou be the Son of God," said the tempter, "do so and so." Jesus suffered all his assaults, but this truth remained. Wicked men tried him, but could not shake the rock. Then the last enemy, death, struck the rock, but only to endure defeat, and final destruction. He died for saying He was the Son of God, and rose from the dead to confirm it. He who first uttered it at the Jordan again proclaimed at the shattered grave, "Thou art My Son; it is day have I begotten Thee."—Ps. 2, Acts 13, 33-34.

This victory over death threw back its shadow for a thousand years, and David sweetly sings, "Therefore did my heart rejoice and my tongue was glad; moreover, also, my flesh shall rest in hope, because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

This truth was announced by the Father, confessed by the Son in his death, and confirmed by the Holy Spirit in the resurrection of Christ; and yet it is so plain that a child may believe it and have eternal life in Christ. When he was on earth he drew the little ones to himself because it was so easy for them to understand and to trust and love Him. He was lifted up on the cross to draw all men to Him. His gospel which tells this is the very power of God which saves every one that believes it. It was Jesus' last act on earth to send this gospel to every sinner, because every sinner can believe it. He says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

If this is the greatest truth in the world, it makes it the greatest work of the church of Christ to have this truth heard and believed by men. Jesus tells his disciples to let their light so shine before men that they, seeing their good work, may glorify God. Their good works were not the light; the gospel was the light. But by their good works they would hold forth the gospel or the light so that it would shine forth, as from a candlestick, to all around. The grand work of the church for the world, therefore, is to get it to receive and hold fast the Word of Life. An individual Christian may be assured that the more he can do to induce the greatest number home and abroad to receive Christ and abide in Him the better he will serve his generation according to the Will of God. And what is true of one is true of the church. Let the world hear the gospel and then let your whole life be such as becometh the gospel that the gospel be not hindered nor hid.

In church edification, the great question should be, What are we, individually and as a church, doing to bring men into touch with the Son of the living God? Are we doing our best to have this truth preached, not as a truth among others, but as the truth of the gospel which shall eternally divide the sheep and the goats; not merely as one of the things which the church believes, but as the grand creed of the church, the rock on which the church is built, that has conquered all the powers of darkness? Let men hear distinctly that God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For it pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief, to lay on him the iniquity of us all, that by his stripes we might be healed. A love that could make God's dear Son also His Lamb of sacrifice, and point us to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, is a love amply sufficient to overcome the enmity of every one who comes to God through Christ and in the way which Jesus describes in the gospel. Let all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity join in spreading that gospel and living as it directs.

THE ONTARIO CONVENTION.

The convention of the Disciples of Christ in Ontario opened at Ridgeway, June 2nd, and closed on the 5th. The attendance was large. H. McDiarmid, of Hiram College, and Robert Moffet, of Cleveland, were present. Miss Mary M. Rioch, recently returned from Japan, was also in attendance, and gave an interesting address on "What the Disciples of Christ have done in Japan." The Ontario preachers were present in force. Manitoba was also represented.

The first evening session was given to the interests of the College of the Disciples, St. Thomas. The student-preachers are doing good work both in their classes and in the churches where they work. The college closed the year free from pecuniary obligations. After the reports there were addresses on "Education," "The Need of the College," and "The Relation of the College to the Cause."

Seventy-two churches are scattered throughout the province. Nearly all are in a prosperous condition. The membership is about 4,500. During the year 286 baptisms were reported. There are 29 Sunday-schools, 2,123 scholars and 201 teachers. It was recommended that the weekly offering of the schools be tithed for home missions, foreign missions and educational work, instead of having special offerings for these objects. Also that the library system be abolished, and the money now spent in the purchase of books be used to improve the *quality* of weekly literature. There are thirty-three societies of Christian Endeavor in the province. The reports show that many of them are doing excellent work for others, as well as helping the individual members. In their offerings they remember home and foreign missions and the college of the Disciples.

The Home Mission Board presented an encouraging report, showing much progress in weak, struggling churches. More than the apportionments and expenses had been raised; the total amount being \$1,950.51, the expenditure \$1,600.03, leaving a balance of \$350.48. But the deficit of \$503.62 last year turns this balance into a deficit of \$153.14. The apportionments for this year amount to \$1,650. But that there may be the means with which to enter new fields, it is recommended that \$2,000 be raised. There were appropriate addresses on "Our Strength and our Weakness" and "Evangelical Work," and a conference on "How to Increase the Interest in the work of the Co-operation."

The report of the business manager of *The Christian Messenger* shows a lengthening subscription list and growing receipts. A conference as to the best way of still further increasing the circulation and usefulness of the paper was held. More than 100 new subscribers were pledged in a short time. C. T. Paul is retained as editor-in-chief.

The president of the Co-operation for the new year is John Campbell, St. Thomas; vice-president, Thomas Whitehead, Walkerton; recording secretary, J. W. Kilgour, Guelph; and corresponding secretary, W. D. Cunningham, St. Thomas. Toronto was recommended as the place for the next annual June convention.

This report is condensed from *The Christian Messenger*. H. W. S.